

**TOWN OF NORMAL ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2016, 5:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, UPTOWN STATION
11 UPTOWN CIRCLE, NORMAL, IL**

Members Physically Present:

Mr. Schaab, Ms. Hood, Ms. Brand, and Mr. Palmgren

Members Absent:

Mr. Anderson, Mr. Blakney and Mr. Penn

Others Present:

Corporation Counsel, Brian Day, Director of Inspections, Greg Troemel, Town Planner, Mercy Davison, and Office Associate, Sheila Elgin

Call to Order:

Vice Chairperson Hood called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and noted a quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Schaab moved, seconded by Ms. Brand, to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2016, meeting and February 24, 2016, special meeting. Motion to approve carried 4-0.

Public Hearings:

a. 16-05-05-V: Variance for Fence Height, 1302 Westview

Ms. Davison reviewed the staff report. She said that the property backs up to East College Ave. There are mature evergreen trees along the back of the property that have been or will need to be removed due to their condition. Staff feels that an 8' fence is not appropriate in a residential area. There are no other fences in the area over 6 feet.

Mrs. Joan Meyers, 1302 Westview Dr., Normal, IL, was sworn in by Vice Chairwoman Hood. Mrs. Meyers said that she wanted to address the staff analysis. In regard to the fence not being in harmony with the neighborhood, she said that the fence will not block the view and no neighbors have objected. The existing fence is sturdy but they want to remove it and replace it with an 8' fence to block the sound from traffic on College Avenue. The traffic has increased since they moved in many years ago. In regard to reasonable return, the application has no monetary value

special circumstances, their daughter and her 4 year old autistic child are living there also. The child has audio and visual sensory issues, and they feel that raising the fence would lower the noise and visual distractions. There will be no harm or cost to the Town of Normal and will improve the value of their home.

Mr. Schaab asked if the 8' would only be along the back. Mrs. Meyers said yes, and they will fence the rest of the back yard with a 6' fence.

Mr. Gary Ploense, 101 Marie Way, Normal, IL, was sworn in by Vice Chairwoman Hood. Mr. Ploense said that he lives across the street. He said that he has no issues, especially considering the Meyers' grandson's issues. He asked that the Board consider approving the variation.

There was no one else to speak regarding the application and the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Schaab said that other suburban areas have sound barriers. Ms. Davison said that the most common area that the Town is asked about is Ironwood Subdivision. She said that sound mitigation with a hard surface is a science. She said that the loss of vegetation contributes to the noise.

The public hearing was reopened.

Mr. Doug Meyers, 1302 Westview, Normal, IL, was sworn in by Vice Chairwoman Hood. Mr. Meyers said that he doesn't disagree. There is vegetation along the sides. There will be deflection of sound. It will not be perfect. This will be their expense and will look nice.

Mr. Palmgren asked if they intended to put trees back in. Mr. Meyers said no. The trees grew into each other, into the power lines and died out. Vegetation works but becomes overgrown. Also, salt is a problem to keep things growing.

The public hearing was closed.

Mr. Palmgren said that he felt there are special circumstances and College Ave. is noisy.

Ms. Brand moved, seconded by Mr. Palmgren, to approve the application as requested with an 8' fence across the rear of the property.

Ayes: Mr. Schaab, Mr. Palmgren, Ms. Brand and Ms. Hood

Nays: None
Motion declared carried.

b. 16-05-06-SU: Amended Special Use for Addition of Cell Tower Equipment, 601 S. Main St.

Ms. Davison reviewed the staff report. She said that the request is for an amended special use to add equipment for a cell tower. Equipment was added within the last year. They are now requesting additional equipment to be added on the north side. Staff recommends approval with the condition that landscaping be added on the north side between the equipment and the street.

Mr. Mike Bieniek, 10700 W Higgins Rd., Rosemont, IL, was sworn in by Vice Chairwoman Hood. Mr. Bieniek said that they wish to add equipment on the north side of the tower and co-locate at 62'. They want to provide a vinyl fence for screening. There is no room on the Main St. side for landscaping. There would be room on Dale St. side. They prefer the fence because the students cut through and would destroy any landscaping. Also the gas station piles snow there in the winter. They are only leasing an 8'X10' pad and have no rights outside that area. They are proposing a 7' vinyl fence to screen the equipment. He said that code accommodates for fencing as screening. Landscaping would not provide the same screening benefit. The gas station owner wants room for foot traffic. The possible landscape area is only a 3-5' strip. They would have to lease additional space in order to provide landscaping.

Mr. Doug Reichl, 350 W. Hubbard, Chicago, IL, was sworn in by Vice Chairwoman Hood. Mr. Reichl said that he owns property to the west. He asked about the equipment on the tower. Ms. Davison pointed out the equipment area on the photos and said that there is additional equipment on the tower. She said that co-locating is required.

Mr. Troemel said that it is a small tower at 70'.

There was no one else to speak and the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Palmgren noted that there was not a lot of grass area in the photo and he liked the idea of a fence. Ms. Davison said that there is room for plantings. The Town can require plantings as part of a Special Use permit. Mr. Schaab asked about the standards for telecommunication towers in regard to fencing.

There was discussion regarding the landscaping requirements.

Mr. Palmgren moved, seconded by Ms. Brand, to recommend to Council approval of the application with screening the 10' X 10 enclosure with 7' tall fencing and providing landscaping as recommended by staff.

Ms. Brand noted that she felt that a fence is fine for hiding the equipment.

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Ayes: Mr. Schaab, Mr. Palmgren and Ms. Hood

Nays: Ms. Brand

Motion declared carried.

Other Business:

None

Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Schaab moved, seconded by Mr. Palmgren, to adjourn the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila Elgin
Office Associate